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**Boeing Invests in Wings of Hope STEM Program for Students**

Jennings, Ferguson-Florissant and Kirkwood students to participate in spring 2019 pilot

**ST. LOUIS (November 19)** — Boeing awarded [Wings of Hope](#) a \$79,896 grant to support a new hands-on STEM learning program for students called Soar into STEM. The pilot program, set to launch in the spring, is designed to pique students' interest in STEM and aviation careers by allowing them to work on Wings of Hope aircraft at the nonprofit's Chesterfield hangar. The grant supports Boeing's commitment to developing tomorrow's innovators by investing in STEM education.

"Boeing has long been a part of the Wings of Hope family. Many of our volunteers are Boeing retirees, and we've enjoyed the company's friendship and support for many years," said Wings of Hope President and CEO Bret Heinrich. "Boeing understands the challenges for building today's and tomorrow's aviation workforce and they stepped up to invest in this exciting new program to engage young people in joining the STEM workforce of the future. This grant will have a significant impact on our community's pipeline of scientists, engineers and aviators."

Wings of Hope developed the program curriculum by partnering with STEM experts and educators, including representatives from the Ferguson-Florissant, Jennings and Kirkwood school districts and the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri. Maritz provided seed funding for the planning phase of the program.

"Jennings School District is so excited to partner with Wings of Hope to help high schools soar to new heights in aviation and other STEM areas. Wings of Hope engaged a regional team of leaders for a year to tour the facilities, meet the CEO and key staff, discuss and create innovative internship opportunities and STEM activities, and more, at the historic Wings of Hope location," said Jennings School District Superintendent Art McCoy. "Our students are eager to get started, and we are so grateful to Boeing for supporting Wings of Hope on this transformative workforce development, STEM-based opportunity for our youth."

The Soar into STEM pilot program will be held at Wings of Hope's world headquarters at Spirit of St. Louis Airport in Chesterfield. Students will meet four Saturdays for hands-on repair and modification of an airplane, presentations by guest speakers, and information about the Wings of Hope mission. At the program's end, students will be assessed on aviation concepts and knowledge about aviation-related career paths.

The program will culminate with the students taking a flight in a small-engine aircraft. These flights will be sponsored by [Elite Aviation](#), a flight instructor school at Spirit of St. Louis Airport.

### **About Wings of Hope**

[Wings of Hope](#) changes and saves lives through the power of aviation. In the U.S., the nonprofit provides medical air transport services – free of charge – to individuals who need access to specialized medical care. The organization also works in 10 countries outside of the U.S., partnering with communities on programs that improve health care, education, and food and economic security. Wings of Hope has been twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize and has a 4-star rating on Charity Navigator. In 2017, Wings of Hope directly served 45,858 people around the world. Visit [wingsofhope.ngo](http://wingsofhope.ngo) or call 636-537-1302.

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